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Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Letter dated 11 October 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of an appeal from the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation addressed to the United Nations General Assembly, the parliaments of the States Members of the United Nations and international parliamentary organizations on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 42.

(*Signed*) V. **Nebenzia**

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Annex to the letter dated 11 October 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

Seventh convocation

Appeal from the State Duma addressed to the United Nations General Assembly, the parliaments of the States Members of the United Nations and international parliamentary organizations on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba

The State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation calls on the United Nations General Assembly, the parliaments of the States Members of the United Nations and international parliamentary organizations to urge the United States of America to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba.

The State Duma reaffirms the position set out in its statements and appeals over a number of years concerning Washington's policy of sanctions against the Republic of Cuba.

For over 50 years, contrary to the fundamental purposes and principles of the United Nations, the United States of America has been unilaterally exerting political and economic pressure on the Republic of Cuba. The sanctions imposed by Washington over many years not only hamper the development of the Cuban economy but also encroach on the rights and legitimate interests of Cuban citizens, including with regard to the provision of medicines and essential goods.

Washington has long ignored the resolutions on the necessity of ending the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, which are adopted by an absolute majority of votes in the United Nations General Assembly. In October 2016, the United States of America abstained in the vote on the resolution, which can be seen as a step in the right direction. However, this step has not been followed up.

The policy pursued by the United States of America in relation to a neighbouring independent State is completely incompatible with the basic principles of international law set out in the Charter of the United Nations. In accordance with the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, every State has an inalienable right to choose its own political, economic, social and cultural system without interference of any kind from another State.

The normalization of bilateral relations with Havana announced by Washington, the acknowledgement that the policy towards Cuba is outdated, the relaxation of certain aspects of the embargo and the exchange of diplomatic missions have not led in practice to the lifting of the majority of the restrictions and sanctions against the Cuban State and its people.

Despite expectations, Cuba-United States relations are not actually improving. On the contrary, the process is tending to slow down; there is no progress on issues that are of fundamental importance for the dialogue between Washington and Havana. The statements of the United States authorities addressed to Cuba, which are disturbingly trenchant and are being made on the most prominent stages,

including those of international organizations, are indicative of a revival of confrontational elements that threaten to undermine agreements previously reached.

The deputies of the State Duma welcome the aspiration of the world's peoples, including the United States public, to achieve the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba and the swift normalization of Cuba-United States relations.

The State Duma calls on the United States Administration to stop obstructing the realization of the sovereign rights of Cuba — freedom of international trade and navigation and mutually beneficial commercial, economic and financial cooperation with all States — and not to set itself against the international community, which is firmly demanding the lifting, as soon as possible, of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba and respect for the generally accepted principles and norms of international law, including the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs.

The Cubans have been actively resisting external aggression and harsh sanctions for decades, which demonstrates the futility of the economic, commercial and financial embargo. The embargo, which has been in place since 1962, cannot crush the Cuban people, for whom the most important value is a free homeland.

Recognizing the central coordinating role of the United Nations in international relations, the State Duma calls on the United Nations General Assembly, the parliaments of the States Members of the United Nations and international parliamentary organizations to speak out firmly for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and to take practical steps to that end at the bilateral and multilateral levels, through various forms of international cooperation.

V.V. **Volodin**
Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly
of the Russian Federation
Moscow

27 September 2017